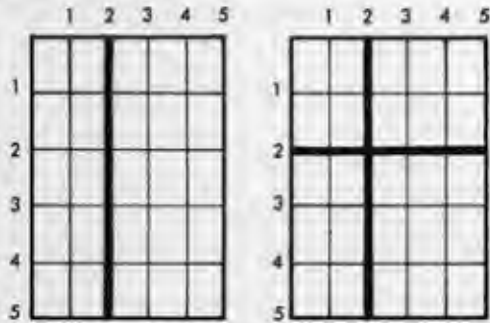
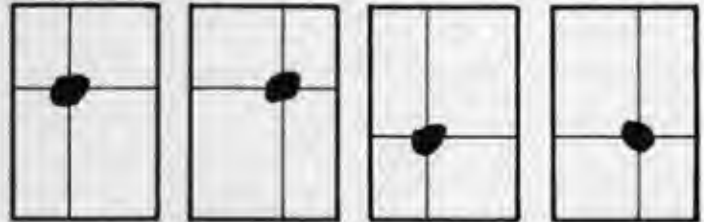


The Visual Center— place the center of interest in these areas for a pleasing composition



The simplest method of establishing the visual center of a picture area is to divide the top and side frame lines into five equal parts and then divide the picture area into any combination of two and three parts as shown.



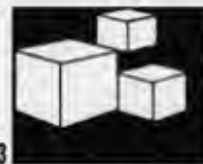
Any object may be counted on to draw added interest through placement in or near the visual center. So place it, an object needs very little emphasis to make it effective.



Wrong. There is a strange awkwardness when a picture has no visual center and when objects just touch each other.



Right. We have put them together pleasingly by placing the largest circle at the visual center and overlapping one of the circles.



Wrong. The cubes are disturbing because they seem to just touch each other—no visual center is apparent and this creates confusion.



Right. Moving the largest cube to the visual center and overlapping the other two cubes unifies the elements harmoniously.



Wrong. Objects should never be bunched in one area of the picture space—don't cut your picture in two.



Right. Cutting off part of the bowl of fruit and overlapping the picture with the bottle gives a harmonious effect.



Wrong. When more than one object is shown in a picture, there is no need to show all of each object.



Right. Part of an object, such as this tree, may be out of the picture—this sometimes serves as a useful "lead in" to the picture.



1 The figure has been placed in the exact center — the space around the figure is evenly divided.



2 The line of the ground across the center divides the picture into four equal areas. This creates monotony.



3 The two buildings now seem crowded and touch the figure and frame lines at awkward points.



4 The line of the mountains seems to rest on the man's head. There is something unsatisfying about this picture.

Using exactly the same elements, we show the wrong and right way of putting them together to create a harmonious balance.



Starting now with the figure at the visual center of the picture space, more variety is present in the working area.



The ground line is now considerably below center. It distributes the space areas more effectively—the man is more prominent.



We now run the two buildings together and behind the figure, there is no awkward touching of contact points.



The lines of the mountains, lower than and behind the man, now give a feeling of depth and balance. This is a more satisfying picture.



The eye may be led from one part of a picture to another part in a natural easy way. Note how positive the shift of interest is back into the second picture.



When all the objects are drawn entirely within the frame lines, monotony may develop. But when parts of these are drawn to appear extending beyond the frame lines or behind one another, we have variety in the composition.

Unrelated lines

When two or more lines in a composition join to form a longer line, the eye is bound to follow this longer line whose parts are formed by the edges of unrelated objects. Never place objects or lines in the background so that their lines join other lines in an object or figure. However, you can arrange these lines successfully if you separate them enough to avoid the undesired line effect.

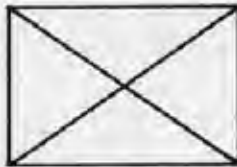


Picture corners



The corners of your picture, due to the juncture of the frame lines, are strong and always attract attention. Therefore, it is always good to terminate lines leading toward a corner at some distance away from it. Cutting objects in half should always be avoided but, as we stated before, lapping of objects at quarters, thirds or fifths adds variety and gives greater interest to your composition.

Let us begin with simple distribution of space.



- 1 The equal distribution of space has the monotony of hitting the same note on a piano, its interest is equally divided, much like repeating your name without changing your voice — it has a rather mechanical appearance.



- 2 Now we have divided the space more unequally. The areas are no longer the same, it is more like changing your voice and adding a few words — or some extra notes to the original note on the piano. Observe that we have not changed the lines, only their position on the picture space.



- 3 We now take the same lines as above and give them movement. The areas now begin to intrigue the imagination — this is dividing space as design. Don't you find this group more interesting than the first two?



- 4 Now we have added tone to the different areas, balancing the weight of interest in each case with an added form. A small element of great interest will balance much larger elements of lesser interest.



1

Equal division of space results in visual boredom.



2

Spaces unrelated because of too great a contrast in area.



3

Near enough in space areas to be pleasantly related.